(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether our country can afford such a high price for gas;

(e) whether it is also a fact that the price of Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) being imported from Qatar by Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) is going to be increased; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to keep this price stable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) India is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project. Various important issues, including pricing of gas, are under discussion amongst the participating countries.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(e) GAIL is not importing any LNG from Qatar. However, Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) imports LNG from Qatar. GAIL is one of the offtakers of this gas for marketing.

PLL has signed a contract with RasGas, Qatar in July 1999 for import of LNG. As per the contract, the price of LNG is linked to the Japan Custom Cleared Crude (JCC) price. However, it has been kept fixed for the initial 5 years, *i.e.*, from 2004 to 2008. From January 2009, the price if LNG would vary on month to month basis depending on the crude price variations.

Further, PLL also has a short-term contract with RasGas Qatar for supply of 1.5 mmtpa LNG till September 2009. However, the present price is valid only till December 2008. The price for the remaining period of the contract, *i.e.*, January-September 2009, would be re-negotiated.

In addition, LNG is also being imported by PLL from Qatar through spot market. However, price of LNG purchased from spot market depends on the prevailing market conditions.

(f) Price of LNG procured under term contracts is as per mutually agreed pricing formula agreed between the buyer and the seller. Government took a decision that the price of Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) procured under term contracts should be non-discriminatory and that a uniform pooled price should be charged from existing and new consumers; accordingly, this Ministry issued orders on March 6, 2007. RLNG procured under term contracts is being supplied on a pooled price basis ***w.e.f.*** August 29, 2007.

Price of LNG purchased from spot market depends on the prevailing market conditions.

Paradeep Oil Refinery project

2440. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) is delaying the completion of Paradeep Oil Refinery; and

(b) what is the total Budget Estimate funds already utilised and the time-frame to complete the work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Paradip Refinery Project is progressing as per the revised schedule.

(b) As on 30.11.2008, an amount of Rs.1461.21 crore has been spent on the Paradip Refinery Project. The Paradip Refinery Project is scheduled to be completed by July, 2012.

CNG retail outlet in Assam

2441. KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the automobile users of Assam are consuming Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) for their vehicles;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has any proposal for starting Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) retail outlets in Assam;

(d) if so, by when it will be started; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At present, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) is operating four auto LPG dispensing stations (ALDS) in the State of Assam at Guwahati (2 Nos), Tinsukia (1 No.) and Jorhat (1 No.).

Government have permitted the sale of auto-LPG for vehicles*vide* Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of use in Motor Vehicle) Order, 2001. As per the Control Order, only imported or import-substituted auto LPG can be used in vehicles.

(c) to (e) As of now, there is no Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) station in any city of Assam. In order to promote investment from public as well as private sector for laying trunk natural gas pipelines and city/local natural gas distribution networks throughout the country, the Government of India has enacted 'The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006' and notified the 'Policy for Development of Natural Gas Pipelines and City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks'. Providing of CNG facilities depends upon availability of gas, setting up necessary infrastructure and economic viability.

New LPG connections

2442. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: